



GAZEBO EXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • MAY 2010

\$3.6 MILLION IN STORM WATER CONTROL PROJECTS ON TAP


A year after the town began its most expansive effort to mitigate storm damage, the Sanitary Board has planned a sequel -- a dozen additional public works projects for 2010, all designed to protect neighborhoods from the ravages of heavy rains.

While some of the projects will be highly visible, Sanitary Board President Rex Burton said others will use technological innovations to help Public Works employees keep tabs on the status of what is going on underground in hundreds of miles of storm and sanitary sewers that make up the town's sanitary district.

"We are extremely pleased with the work that has been done throughout town, so far, and are looking forward to the completion of our 2010 project list," Burton said. "Our goal has been to help protect the neighborhoods by planning for major rain events and eliminating inflow and infiltration into the sanitary sewers, which can overwhelm the system and lead to basement backups."

The projects will be financed using the remaining \$3.6 million of the '09 bond issue.

From the sewer separation and storm water enhancement projects already started in the Strong Street neighborhoods to the installation of a pump station near Southridge School, Burton said the board has spent countless hours planning the projects they believe will best serve the residents.

"Working to prevent the devastation caused by storms continues to be a major priority," Councilman Dan Vassar said. "We can't control storms but we now have much better control over our capacity to deal with them." 

2010 PROJECTS

- Strong Street from Liable Road to Kennedy Avenue -- Installation of new storm sewers along Strong as well as sewer separations and installation of storm sewers along the cul-de-sacs that feed onto Strong.
- Installation of SCADA monitoring system for all pumps and rain gauges.
- Upgrade of all water meters to remote readers making it possible to read all water meters in a single day.
- Increasing capacity to the storm sewers around the North Drive Pumping Station to expedite the removal of water from the streets.
- Main Street drainage improvements west of Indianapolis Boulevard -- in cooperation with Munster, storm water from the neighborhood will flow into a nearby detention pond.
- 41st Lane sanitary sewer improvements.
- Kennedy Avenue south of 45th -- sanitary sewer installation.
- Southridge School area -- construct pump station to relieve standing storm water problems.
- Lakeside - sanitary sewer upgrade.
- Cline Avenue south of Ridge Road -- Installation of storm and sanitary sewers as part of reconstruction plan.
- Kleinman Road from Ridge to 45th -- Planning begins as part of a reconstruction of the thoroughfare, which is expected to be built in 2011.



TIME FOR HIGHLAND'S SPRING CLEANUP MAY 18

If you need a spark of inspiration to complete your spring chores, the town may be providing it: Additional trash collection crews will be scheduled May 18 to pick up what typically amounts to mountains of additional trash.

Residents are encouraged to schedule their spring cleaning to coincide with the cleanup. Construction debris, concrete, household hazardous waste and leaves are not included.

If your spring cleanup means disposing of hazardous waste, please save it for the town's Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day on Aug. 28.

Items such as paint thinners, antifreeze, pesticides and pool chemicals may be dropped off at the Public Works Facility parking lot, 8001 Kennedy Avenue.

SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT PROGRAM UNDER WAY

The town has renewed its sidewalk replacement program for 2010 to help residents replace cracked and crumbling public walks.

HOW IT WORKS: The town removes the broken concrete. Homeowners have the option to hire their own contractor -- as long as they are licensed to do work in Highland -- or pay the town to do the work. Typically, it costs \$3 per square foot for concrete installation.

INFO: Call (219) 838-1080.

PRIME KIOSK ADVERTISING

Advertising space is available on three Highland kiosks located at:

- Highway and Fifth Street at Main Square Park
- Highway Avenue across from Lincoln's
- Bike path near Kennedy under the Ridge Road overpass

FOR MORE INFO: Rental is \$25 per month with a one-year lease. Email Cecile Petro at cpetro@highland.in.gov or call (219) 972-7598 for details.

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NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

HIGHLAND LAUDS HAMMOND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

It's been four years since a unique partnership forged between Highland and neighboring Hammond led to the demolition of a decaying apartment complex.

It was a partnership that led the Highland Redevelopment Commission to borrow \$1.75 million to help Hammond defray the cost of razing the property.

Today, the 22 acres where the River Park Apartments once stood at Kennedy Avenue and the Little Calumet River remains vacant, save for a cadre of Canadian geese, a coyote or two and a family of foxes.

Highland Council President Mark Herak said he is in no rush for Hammond to find a new owner for the property even though it will mean the town is repaid in full.

"Some of the residents and visitors of River Park Apartments caused problems for Highland and we were happy to see it razed," Herak said. "We would prefer that Hammond get a developer for the property, which will lead to additional commerce for our town."

Herak said the right commercial developer for the property could spark development along north Kennedy Avenue in the area that has been designated as a Riverfront Development District by the state of Indiana. With Kennedy Avenue reconstruction nearly complete, the Redevelopment Commission is hoping to move its plans for redeveloping the area into high gear.

As development plans for both communities evolve, Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin applauded the financial agreements between both communities, which he says are working as they were intended.

"Since August 2008, the city of Hammond has been reimbursing the town of Highland for the cost of the interest payments on the bonds as they come due on Aug. 1 and Feb. 1 each year," Griffin said. "To date, the Hammond Redevelopment Department has paid nearly \$191,000 in interest. It has been the case that I have received payment before I send the invoice." 🐦

GARBAGE FEES INCREASE THIS MONTH

Beginning in May, the monthly cost for residential curb-side pick-up will be \$17.52 -- an increase of 62 cents per month and a total of \$5.12 in 2010.

The increased costs are a pass-through -- meaning that the revenues collected as part of the increase will be sent directly to Republic Services Inc., the town's refuse vendor.

As part of a four-year contract approved by the Town Council, costs will continue to increase by about four percent per year.

"We really had no choice," Council President Mark Herak said. "Every trash vendor builds annualized increases into the cost and Republic Services was no exception. Republic offered us the best deal. In addition, they were willing for us to continue to have a single collection day each week, which really keeps our town looking cleaner."

You may qualify for a \$1 per month discount on trash collection if you are 65 or older. Applications are available at Town Hall.

PRICE HIKE SCHEDULE

DATE	INCREASE
May 1, 2010	\$17.52 per month
April 1, 2011	\$18.05 per month
April 1, 2012	\$18.65 per month
April 1, 2013	\$19.28 per month

Nearly 60 residents have been approved to participate in the discount program.

Building Commission Ken Mika reminds residents that garbage can be set out within 24 hours of pickup, which is most Tuesdays.

"We have noticed people taking their garbage to the curb days in advance and that is simply not permitted," Mika said. "The town has regulations in place to govern when garbage may be deposited at the curb. Residents who take their waste out too early risk a citation and fine." 🐦

ROAD CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

CLINE AVENUE CLOSES FOR FACELIFT

Cline Avenue will be closed between Ridge Road and 45th Street for eight weeks beginning in mid May.


Engineers say the bridge over the Cady March ditch is in such poor shape, it cannot support traffic once construction begins to replace and widen the aging structure.

The road will be widened to three lanes and sport new curbs, sewers and street lights.

The facelift is a joint venture between Highland and Griffith using a combination of local road and federal highway funds.

During construction, north- and south-bound traffic will be detoured to Kleinman Road in Highland and Broad Street in Griffith. Scheeringa's farm stand will be accessible from the south using either 45th Street or Ernie Strack Drive during the construction.

Because Kleinman Road is a two-lane road in need of repair and Broad Street is under construction, motorists are encouraged to find alternate routes to get to their destinations.

"Our hope is that our contractor will be able to get a great deal of additional roadwork completed while the bridge is being replaced, which will mean less construction under traffic and a faster completion date," Public Works Director John Bach said. "We ask everyone to be patient while the construction is underway. It is going to be a real benefit once the road project is completed later this year." 

INDIANAPOLIS BRIDGE STAYS UP -- FOR NOW

Demolition of the Indianapolis Boulevard bridge -- under consideration for years -- will have to wait a little longer.

Public Works Director John Bach said the project will not be bid until December, pushing work back until Spring 2011.

The bridge has been the scene of numerous accidents over the years because of slick conditions and the bridge design itself, which veers northwest at the top of the bridge deck.

Despite the delay, Bach said the plan remains the same -- to replace the bridge with a road that will be built at, or near, grade.

When complete, he said the road might have a bit of a hill but the bridge that currently towers over the landscape will be gone.

KENNEDY AVENUE NEARLY DONE

The final phase of paving, marking and signal synchronization on Kennedy Avenue north of Highway Avenue should be complete before Memorial Day. Public Works Director John Bach said the contractor is taking all of the steps necessary to complete the project, which began in late autumn in 2008.

"We expect the project to be substantially complete by mid May," Bach said. "We are pleased with the progress and the look of the finished project."



FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS KEEP ON GIVING

The long-awaited reconstruction of Kleinman Road from Ridge Road south to 45th Street will get a boost -- thanks, in part, to the federal government.

Public Works Director John Bach said savings on the Cline Avenue reconstruction, which is slated to begin in a few weeks, will be diverted to begin engineering on Kleinman Road.

The heavily traveled thoroughfare has been in need of reconstruction for a

number of years and is the only north-south route in town that has yet to be improved. In prior years, the project was delayed because of a lack of funding.

In all, the savings on the Cline Avenue project is expected to be about \$2.4 million -- \$1 million in savings on construction costs and another \$1.4 million offset by federal stimulus funds. The savings will be split by the towns of Highland and Griffith and the surface

transportation arm of the federal government.

Bach said First Group Engineering will prepare plans and specifications for the project. "With Cline Avenue construction ready to begin, it will be at least next year before the work on Kleinman can start," he said. "At the same time, the Sanitary Board is evaluating whether a sanitary line should be installed yet this year." 

SUNDAY JUNE 13

HIGHLAND'S OLD-FASHIONED FAMILY PICNIC

PICNIC FESTIVITIES

Bring a picnic lunch or purchase a meal grilled by our volunteer firefighters for only \$4. Meal includes hamburger or hot dog, chips, pop and ice cream.

WHEN: noon to 3:30 p.m.

WHERE: Main Square Park

CARRIAGE RIDES

Free carriage rides sponsored by the Highland Historical Society.

WHEN: 12:30 to 2 p.m.

WHERE: Main Square Park

BAND CONCERT

Highland's own community band will perform a concert with music from each decade.

WHEN: 1:30 to 3 p.m.

WHERE: Main Square Park

CHURCH SERVICE

Area churches, town officials and area residents are invited to participate in a community church service.

WHEN: 10:30 a.m.

WHERE: Front lawn of New Life CRC -- on Ridge Road across from Main Square Park.

CAR CRUISE

Block after block of your favorite classics, muscle cars and street rods!

WHEN: 3 to 9 p.m.

WHERE: Downtown Highland

NOTE: If it rains, we'll simply move the party indoors at Lincoln Center.



MEALS FOR HAITI

Members of the First Christian Reformed and Gloria Dei Lutheran churches are inviting the community to attend an upcoming dinner and/or breakfast in support of relief for Haiti.

Parishioners from the two churches will be traveling to the Dominican Republic for 10 days in June to assist in earthquake relief as part of the international Kids Alive.

Both churches will be hosting meals to help raise funds for the trip. There is no cost. All proceeds from a free-will offering that will be collected at each of the meals will go toward helping to finance supplies for the trip.

Community luncheon

WHEN: 11:30 a.m. **May 16**

WHERE: First Christian Reformed Church, 8910 Grace Street

Community pancake breakfast

WHEN: 8 to 11 a.m. **May 29**

WHERE: Gloria Dei, 3711 Ridge Road

INFO: If you cannot attend one of the events and would like to support the relief efforts, you may send a donation c/o First Christian Reformed, 8910 Grace Street, Highland.

A TASTE OF LAKESIDE PLAZA

Lakeside Plaza is having a party and the community is invited! Music, free food prepared by the plaza businesses along with an inflatable jumpie for the kids and other activities will be featured.

WHEN: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. **May 29**

WHERE: Lakeside Plaza, located at Delaware Parkway at 45th Street

INFO: Call (219) 922-4100

HONORING OUR VETERANS

The community will honor veterans from every branch of the military at this special centennial Memorial Day event.

WHEN: 10 a.m. **May 31**

WHERE: Main Square Park

INFO: Call Dawn Wolak at (219) 838-7385.